

Sumner Redstone, CEO of CBS parent company Viacom, was quoted in the Asian Wall Street Journal on September 24 saying, "[F]rom a Viacom standpoint, the election of a Republican administration is a better deal. Because the Republican administration has stood for many things we believe in, deregulation and so on. The Democrats are not bad people.... But from a Viacom standpoint, we believe the election of a Republican administration is better for our company."

The airwaves are public, and Viacom's subsidiary must obtain licensing to broadcast over them. That the public interest is a liberal value, while privatization is a conservative one, goes a long way to understand conservative complaints about a "liberal media."

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. Thank you.